

THE
N A T U R E
O F
R E P E N T A N C E
A N D
F A I T H

Opened in their
L O W E S T D E G R E E S ;
Proper for
Sacramental Examination.

By BENJAMIN CHANDLER,
Minister of the Gospel.

John 21. 15. *He saith unto him, Feed my Lambs.*

L O N D O N :

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The P R E F A C E.

WE that are Ministers are not without our Difficulties in every part of our Service: But the awakening secure Sinners, and comforting dejected Saints, are things so peculiarly difficult, that they call for our utmost Study, and Pains, and Application; and if after all we have any little Success, we have Reason thankfully to ascribe it to an higher Hand.

Tho' these two Parts of our Work are in some respects very different, yet herein they agree, that our Endeavours in both are obstructed by a Variety of subtle Artifices of the Evil One, who as studiously opposes the just Consolation of the Children of God, as he does the Illumination and Conviction of such as are in his own Interest. The discovering the Deceitfulness of such Insinuations, either on the one hand or the other, as are apt to have the most pernicious Influence, must be attempted, tho' tis the Great God alone who by his powerful Blessing can make it turn to any Account.

The Worthy Author of this little Tract, has in my Apprehension, here taken Pains to good purpose, to make serious but weak Christians, who are often dejected, sensible of their own Happiness, that they may be thankful, and give God the Glory.

I must indeed acknowledge, that the Way some have taken to lay open the lowest Degree of Grace that is necessary to Salvation, is liable to a great Abuse. I doubt some have been thereby tempted to spiritual Sloth, and a Neglect of suitable Endeavours in order to a further Advance and Progress, as well as to commit other unhappy Mistakes. And yet, on the other hand, if People look upon more as necessary to their Safety, and to the securing and proving their Interest in the Divine Favour, than God has really made requisite; if they

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entertain a Fancy that they can't be true Christians, without being in the highest Form in Christ's School, they are apt to be needlessly dispirited, and to walk disconsolately, while Comfort and Peace truly belongs to them.

For my Part, I freely own I read over these Papers with the greater pleasure, because I find the lowest Degree of Repentance and Faith, which are the two Capital Graces, so stated here, as to afford a suitable Foundation for Comfort, without leaving the least Encouragement to Negligence, nay in such a way, as to excite diligent Endeavours after Universal Holiness.

If the Reader brings but a serious Spirit with him, I dare venture to promise him he'll here meet with what may employ his Thoughts to good purpose; and has a likelihood to contribute to his Satisfaction and Assistance, in that which is his main Concern. And I can the more freely recommend this Discourse to others, because having put the Manuscript into the hands of one that has for some time been under Spiritual Exercises, I receiv'd a great many Thanks after the Perusal of it, for the Light which it gave, and the Benefit that was receiv'd from it.

Metbinks 'tis pity but such faithful Labourers in our Lord's Harvest should have more Encouragement. May be that alone is able to do it, incline the Hearts of such as have a Capacity, to give Assistance.

That my Worthby Brother and his Numerous Family may be kept from distressing Want; and that many Souls may be the better for his stated Ministerial Labours; and also for this Endeavour of his, to comfort such as are asking the Way to Zion, with their Faces thitherward, is the Prayer of

An hearty Desirer of

the Common Salvation,

Jan. 24. 1778.

EDMUND GALAMY.

The AUTHOR to the READER.

SEEING the *Eternal Salvation* of our Souls depends upon the *Truth and Sincerity* of our Repentance and Faith; and our Peace and Comfort here, and joyful Attendance on God in all his Ordinances, do ebb and flow, according as we doubt of, or be satisfied in, the Truth of these Graces; it highly concerns us to be rightly informed in their Nature, that we may know what is Repentance and Faith, and what is not; and for that purpose we must search out the lowest Degrees of saving Repentance and saving Faith. For as there is a vast gradual Difference between a Child just quickened in the Womb, when the Spirit of a Man is first formed in him; and a Child born into the World, and brought up to some Understanding: So there is a great Difference between two Persons, one in whom Christ is but just formed, and another in whom that holy Image is grown to some Maturity. In examining our selves therefore concerning the Truth of our Repentance and Faith, we must use those Marks, that do shew, just their bare Nature as near as we can, and no more. If we make use of the Marks of strong Faith, and of a deep Repentance, we cut off all the weak ones in Christ's Church, whose low Statures will not reach those high Measures. If we use Marks too low, then we flatter and deceive Hypocrites. There is something in which they differ, which a Hypocrite has not, and a true, sound, penitent Believer hath. What that is I have endeavour'd to shew, even the lowest saving Degree, that is by Man discernible.

Reader, if thou find the following things in thy self, in the Name of God I give thee the Peace of God. And I do in-

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vite and encourage thee joyfully and thankfully to praise God, and to pray to him, as thy reconciled God, and that in thy Closet, Family, Holy Assemblies, and at the Table of the Lord. Let the Mercy of the Father, the Merits of the Son, the Grace of the holy Spirit, make thee joyful in God's Church, the House of Prayer. That God, whom thou fearest and darest, does hear the Desires that be in thy humbled Soul, and he will satisfy them. He will bless thy Endeavours, he will be found of thee in his Ways ; he will save thee more and more from the Sin thou hatest ; he will work the Grace in thee thou lovest and choosest ; he will give thee that Mercy and Pardon which thou prayest for. That Son of God to whom thou lookest, looks down with tender Mercies on thee ; he takes thee into his Protection ; he has undertaken and begun thy Soul's Cure ; he pleads thy Cause ; he has made and will keep thy Peace with God, and in his way and time perfectly heal thy Soul, tho' it be in thee a Day of small things, as small as can be, if there be any thing, he will not despise it ; for he will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoaking Flax.

The

The Nature of REPENTANCE.

C H A P. I.

In Repentance the Will is turned from Sin to Holiness, to the Use of the Means of Grace, and to the Glory and Enjoyment of God.

THE Question propos'd to be spoken unto, is,
What is saving Repentance in its lowest degree?
Repentance supposes a Man to have some Knowledge of God's Law, so as to know Good and Evil ; for a Man can't repent of that of which he is wholly ignorant. And it includes some Knowledge of the evil Nature and evil Effects of Sin, as it is against the Being and all the Attributes of God ; and as it was the Cause of the Death of the Son of God, and is the Cause of all the Miseries under which Mankind groans to this Day ; for a Man repents not of Sin, if in his Repentance he does not eye its evil Nature and evil Effects. And it comprehends some Sorrow for Sin upon these accounts, for a Man will never repent of that which is no trouble to him. And there is in it a free Confession of Sin to God, and a judging our selves worthy of the Curse of that Law we have broken ; for he that hides his Sin, and justifies himself, is so far from Repentance, that he would rather have God repent of making such a strict Law, than that himself should repent of breaking it. These things I pass, supposing the Reader in some good measure to understand them. But the chief thing is the Change of the Will : For there may be clear Knowledge, strong Convictions, great Troubles of Conscience, and frequent Confessions, and no Repentance till the Will

be changed. Which Change of the Will is in these three things.

1. *When the Will is more against Sin than for it, and more for Holiness than against it.* I say, *more*; for when a Man is almost, not quite, a Penitent, the Will is in some measure against Sin, but more for it; and in some measure for Holiness, but more against it: But when a Man is a thorough Penitent, tho' the Will remains in part for Sin, yet it is more against it; and tho' the Will is in part against a holy Life, yet it is more for it than against it. There are Lustings of the Flesh against the Spirit in a Penitent, but the Lustings of the Spirit prevail over those of the Flesh. The Meaning is this:

He that truly repents of his Sin, sees so much Evil in Sin, as it is against God's Holiness, Sovereignty, common Goodness, special Love and Mercy in *Christ*, &c. that he is willing to be no longer such a sinful Creature as he is and has been, but had rather be made holy. He is willing sinful Works should be no more done by him, but had rather live without Sin. He is willing Good Works should be no more omitted by him; he had rather the Holy Law of God were perfectly kept by him. So that in Repentance the Will is willing it self should be chang'd. Thus,

Whatever Duty a Man is at present unwilling of, and unable to do, he is willing God's Grace should make him willing of, and able for that Duty, *working in him both to will and to do.* And whatever Sin a Man at present is willing of, and lusts after, he is willing God's Grace should make him unwilling of that Sin, and cure those Lustings and evil Desires that are in his Soul, that he may no more lust after evil forbidden things. And as soon as the Will yields thus to God, and says, not, *I am willing of every Duty, I am resolv'd to keep all the holy Laws of God, even the most self-denying*; but, *I am willing to be made by God's Grace willing of my Duty in every thing. I am willing a Resolution for a tho-*

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rough holy Life might be wrought in me. Not, I am unwilling of all Sin, and resolv'd to forsake it; but, I am willing to be made unwilling of all Sin, and I am willing a Resolution to forsake Sin should be wrought in me: I say, as soon as the Will yields thus to God, the Man has a principal part of Repentance wrought in his Will, and he has taken the first step out of the Ways of Sin into the holy Ways of God.

2. *When a Man is truly willing to use all the Means God has appointed, to get Grace to make him willing of, and able for, his whole Duty; and unwilling of all Sin.* God has appointed Means of Grace, which they must use, who desire his Grace to make them willing to obey, and unwilling to offend. What those Means are I will shew by and by in its place. A Man's using those Means, all of them, not only some of them, for the End for which they were appointed, shews that he truly desires his own Satisfaction. And therefore that Man that pretends to desire, or, be willing of God's Grace to turn his Will, change his Heart, and uses not all the Means, that he knows to be Means, to obtain that Grace, deceives himself.

3. *When a Man in all this designs God chiefly, that he might honour him and enjoy him.* A penitent Man knows what a Dishonour Sin is to God, and therefore is willing to be rid of it: and that Holiness honours God, and therefore would be holy. He knows that Sin deprives him of the Love of God, and therefore would be saved from it, that it might not separate him from the Love of God for ever, and shut him up in everlasting Darkness, under God's eternal Displeasure. He knows that Holiness so fits a Man for the Enjoyment of God, that *without it no Man can see the Lord*; and therefore would be holy, that he might be happy in God's Love, which he judges better than Life.

These three things contain the Nature of Saving Repentance. This is the turning from Sin to God, which is so much commanded in the Scriptures, and

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hath the Promise of Life and Pardon. Not the *All*, or *Whole* of it, in respect of *Degrees*, where we must rest; but the *All*, or *Whole* of it, in respect of *Parts*. This is the first Draught of it in the Heart, which must, and if true, will be, copied out in the Life.

Therefore those Men go too high, that judge of the truth of their own and other Mens Repentance, by the actual forsaking of Sin in the Life. When there is as yet little or nothing of actual Reformation in the Life, examine what the chief Desires, Purposes, Aims and Ends of the Heart be: These be the things that will justify a Man to be penitent, or condemn him as impenitent, in God's Sight, according as they be either for God and Holiness, or for Sin and the World.

Each of these Heads will need Explication and Proof; I will therefore open and prove them severally.

C H A P. II.

That the Will's being willing to be changed is a part of Repentance, proved; Because, impenitent Sinners are unwilling to be changed. Penitent Persons have expressed their Repentance in their Desires to be so changed and enabled. When any desire such a Change, God gives them the Holy Ghost and Pardon.

I Will offer some things for the proof of this, viz. that Repentance is a Man's Willingness to be made willing and able to do his Duty; and also his Willingness to use all God's appointed Means to get that Change; and a Man's designing chiefly the Glory and Enjoyment of God in that Change of himself. And in this, many things will fall in for explication of these three Heads.

I. The Will's Willingness to be changed is a part of Repentance, I prove by these Reasons.

1. *Impenitent Sinners are unwilling to have their Wills*

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changed, or, they will not be made willing of their Duty; they will not be made unwilling of Sin. Seeing the Natures of the Penitent and Impenitent are contrary, what the one chuses the other refuses; therefore if impenitent Persons do refuse, or, be unwilling of God's healing Grace, and their Impenitency does consist of that their Unwillingness be be healed; then penitent Persons are willing of God's healing Grace, and their Repentance does consist of that Willingness.

We shall find that the Holy Scriptures do set forth Mens Wickedness to be, not only their refusing God's Law to rule them; but also their refusing God's Grace to turn and change them. And most certain it is, that that Man is an impenitent Wretch, who will not himself turn from Sin, and is not willing God should turn him; or, who is not willing, and will not be made willing to turn from Sin to God. That this is the Case of impenitent Sinners, see these Places: *Job 21. 14. We desire not the knowledge of thy Ways.* These are the Words of impenitent Persons. Seeing Words of Knowledge in the Scriptures do imply Affection and Obedience, as the Knowledge of God signifies so to know him, as to love and fear him; the meaning of the Place is, they were unwilling to be taught so to know God's Ways, as to love and walk in them, *Psal. 81. 10, 11. Open thy Mouth wide, and I will fill it. But my People would not hearken to my Voice, and Israel would none of me:* that is, God offer'd them as much of his sanctifying Grace as they needed, if they would have it, but they would have none of it. *Prov. 1. 23. Behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you; namely, to turn and change your Hearts, and subdue your Sins: A most gracious Offer! Ver. 24. Ye refused, no Man regarded, ye have set at nought all my Counsel, and would none of my Reproof. Ver. 29. They hated Knowledge, and did not chuse the Fear of the Lord. Ver. 30. They would none of my Counsel, they despised all my Reproof.* Here are several Expressions to signify their great Unwillingness that God should teach them

their Duty, and incline their Hearts to it, and turn them from their Sins. They did not only not fear God, but they did not chuse the Fear of God : They were not willing to be made to fear God. They refused, set at nought, would have none of, but hated all that God said and offer'd to them. *Matt. 22. 3, 5. And they would not come. They made light of it.* In that Parable Christ and his Fulness is set forth, whereof his sanctifying Grace is a chief Part ; and an offer of all is made to needy Sinners ; but many that have the Offer, will have none of it ; that is, they be unwilling Christ should save them from their Sins, and make them holy. Christ would many a time have gather'd *Jerusalem's* Children together as a Hen her Chickens, and they would not. Wicked Men are set forth in the Scriptures to be Haters of God ; yea, to be at enmity against God. Which Expressions shew the height of their Unwillingness to be made like God in Holiness. The violent Opposition that has been made against the faithful Prophets and Ministers God has sent to reclaim Men from their Sins, does shew that they be not willing to be saved from their Sins, and to be made holy.

2. *Penitent Persons have expressed their Repentance by their Desires and Willingness to be made willing of, and able for their Duty, and unwilling of Sin.* We find in the Holy Scriptures, that God's sincere People have pray'd for the turning of their Wills and Affections. *Psal. 119. 35. Make me to go in the Path of thy Commandments ; that is, make me willing and able to keep thy holy Laws. Ver. 26. Incline my Heart unto thy Testimonies ; that is, make my Will willing to keep them, and unwilling to break them. Psal. 51. 10. Create in me a clean Heart ; that is, turn my Will from the Lust of Uncleanness, that I may no more lust after Women. And renew a right Spirit in me ; that is, fix my Will constantly upon my Duty, that I may be always willing of it. Jerem. 31. 18. Turn thou me, and I shall be turned.* This turning is a turning from Sin, because upon this Prayer *Ephraim* is owned

as God's dear Child, of which a Desire to have their outward Captivity turned is no Argument; in this Request they besought God to turn their Hearts from Sin to himself, that he would make them unwilling of Sin and willing of Duty. *Nebem. 1. 11.* That Good Man there describes himself, and the rest of God's humbled and penitent People by this Character, that they did *desire to fear God's Name*; that is, they were willing God should change their Hearts, their Affections, and make them able to fear him. *Psal. 86. 11.* *Unite my Heart to fear thy Name*; that is, do thou settle, engage, and fix my Heart upon thy Fear and Service, that I may be always willing to serve thee, and may not revolt from thee to any false Worship, or to the Lusts and Vanities of this evil World. *Hos. 14. 2.* *Take away all Iniquity.* The Words are part of a penitential Prayer put into their Mouths by the Prophet, wherein they desire the removing the Guilt of their Sins by his pardoning Mercy, and the subduing Sin it self by his sanctifying Grace, that their Affections may be turned, and they no longer love, but henceforth may hate their Sins. *Luke 15. 19.* *Make me as one of thy hired Servants.* The Prodigal in this Request expresses a chief part of his Repentance: In it he professes his Desire and Willingness to be God's Servant, but being sensible of his Guilt and Sin, he looks upon himself as unworthy of such Preferment, and unfit for it; and therefore he prays that God by an *Act of Grace* would receive him into, and by a *Work of Grace* would fit him for, his holy Service, that he might be willing of it, and able to perform it.

3. *When any be truly willing that God should turn their Wills, and make them willing of their Duty, and unwilling of Sin, God gives them the Holy Spirit, and Pardon.* If God forgives any their Sins, and gives them the Holy Ghost for their Sanctifier, this is an undeniable Argument that such Persons are penitent; for God pardons none but such, and the Holy Ghost dwells in none but

such. But God gives Mercy and Grace to such as be willing to have their Wills changed, as will appear by what follows.

When *Ephraim* had pray'd to God to turn him, to change or turn their Wills, as is before noted, God own'd him for his *dear Son*, and *pleasant Child*, and said, *My Bowels are troubled for him*; an Argument of great Compassion: *I will surely have Mercy upon him*, Jer. 31. 18, 20. When the Prodigal had conceived a Thought, a Purpose to return to his Father, and had a Desire to be made one of his *hired Servants*, was willing to be receiv'd into and fitted for his Service, and *was yet a great way off*, that is, as yet not sanctified, but willing to be sanctified. *His Father saw him, and had Compassion, and ran and fell on his Neck, and kissed him.* All which Expressions are Signs of Mercy and tender Affection. And the Servants are commanded to *bring forth the best Robe, and put it on him, and to put a Ring on his Hand, and Shoes on his Feet*; whereby is meant the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit, which God gives to those that are truly penitent, Luke 15. When *Ephraim* had said, *Take away all Iniquity*, that is, Sin it self by sanctifying Grace, God's Answer was, *I will heal their Backslidings, I will love them freely.* Which God would never have said of them, if they had not been penitent; Prov. 1. 22. *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love Simplicity, and the Scorners delight in their Scorning, and Fools hate Knowledge?* that is, they were simple and foolish, and they loved to be such. Ver. 23. *Turn you at my Reproof, behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you*, that is, be no longer willing to retain your Folly and Scorning, be willing to be made wise and serious, and then I will give you my Holy Spirit to work Wisdom and all Grace in you. Matt. 5. 6. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled*: Not they that have Righteousness, Holiness, are here by Christ pronounced blessed; but they that hunger and thirst after it; that is, they that desire it

above all things, and be willing God should work it in them. Which Righteousness or Holiness does consist in the Will's being willing of, or chusing what is good; and in the Will's being unwilling of, or refusing what is evil: And the Hunger and Thirst after this is the Will's being willing to be changed, that it might will, or chuse, what is good, and might be unwilling of, or refuse, what is evil. They that desire this Change in their Wills, have a Promise of being filled; that is, their Wills shall be changed, that they shall be able to chuse the Good, and refuse the Evil, and shall not be averse from their Duty, nor lust after evil things. Upon the account of which such Persons are pronounced Blessed, which our Lord would never have said of them, if they had not been penitent.

CHAP. III.

Another part of Repentance is, when a Man is truly willing to use all the Means appointed by God for the turning his Will from evil to good; because God has appointed Means by which he will change the Will, and he would have us use those Means for that purpose. Some will not use all those Means, and they are not penitent. He that duly uses all the Means to get Grace to turn his Will, is penitent.

II. **A** Nother part of Repentance is, *When a Man is truly willing to use all the appointed Means to get Grace to turn his Will, and make him willing of all Good, and unwilling of all Sin.*

I. God has appointed many Means by which he will work a Change in the Will, and make it willing of all Good, and unwilling of all Evil; and he will have us use all those Means. These Means are: Prayer, the Word, Sacraments, Lord's-day, watching the Heart, guarding the outward Senses, resisting vain Thoughts, striving against sinful Motions within, Temperance in Diet, for-

Making tempting Persons, Places and Exercises, and all Occasions of Sin, patient bearing Reproof, and keeping good Company.

These be the Means appointed by God for us to use, by which he will work Grace in the Hearts of those that desire to have their Wills changed; and God commands us to use these Means for that End. When *Saul* was become a Penitent, and was willing to be instructed, he was sent to the Ministry of the Word, *Acts* 9. 6. *Paul* exhorts us to let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly, *Coloss.* 3. 16. that is, we should frequently meditate upon it, and suitably apply it to our selves. We be commanded to pray always, *Ephes.* 6. 18. Baptism is called the washing of Regeneration, *Tit.* 3. 5. because it is a Means to wash away Sin. The Lord's Supper is appointed to keep up the worthy Remembrance of Christ's Death in our Souls, and to be a Means to communicate the Holy Ghost to all worthy Receivers. For in that Ordinance we do all drink into one Spirit, *1 Cor.* 12. 13. We must keep our Hearts with all diligence, *Prov.* 4. 23. We must forsake the Foolish and live, *Prov.* 9. 6. We must not come near the Door of the Harlot's House, *Prov.* 5. 8. We must not look upon the Wine, *Prov.* 23. 31. If thou criest after Knowledge, and liftest up thy Voice for Understanding; that is, if thou prayest for it, and prayest earnestly: If thou seekest her as Silver, and searchest for her as for hid Treasures; there's the using all other Means: Then shalt thou understand the Fear of the Lord, and find the Knowledge of God; there's the Success; *Prov.* 1. 2, 4, 5. If we would overcome the Wicked One, and that spiritual Wickedness upon which he works in us, we must take the whole Armour of God, not a Piece, but all of it, *Ephes.* 6. 13. I will yet be enquired of by the House of Israel, to do it for them, *Ezek.* 36. 37. God had before promised all sanctifying Grace, and in this Verse he says, they must attend upon the Use of all Means for it. Blessed is the Man that beareth me, watching daily at my Gates, waiting at the

Posts of my Doors, Prov. 8. 34. that is, as mean inferior People do wait at Great Mens Doors for Admittance, that they may have an Opportunity to speak with them, the Doors and Gates of their Houses being the most likely Place for that purpose; so must we diligently and constantly wait upon God in the use of all means, if we would have any part in his sanctifying Grace.

2. *Some will not use all these Means to get their Wills changed, and they that will not, are not penitent.* Many say their Sin is their Burden, and they desire above all things to have their Hearts changed, that they may be made willing of their Duty, and unwilling of Sin; but they be loth to be at the trouble and pains, that the constant and impartial use of all the Means will cost them, and so do live in the gross Neglect of some of the Means. That such Neglecters of the Means are not truly penitent, appears, because by the Sentence of God's Word they be under Condemnation, as I shall shew presently in its place.

All that make any Profession of Religion will sometimes use some of the Means of Grace, as they think, for a good End, to get Grace: but they use only some, and not all, and that spoils all. If a Man use some of the Means of natural Life, and not all, every body knows what will become of him in a little time: And many a Man's sad Experience tells him what a lamentable Condition his Soul is in, because he uses but some of the Means of Grace. Some Men will pray in their Closets, in their Families, in the Assemblies of God's People, yea and fast too; a good thing! they will hear the Word, and read it; they will go to the Table of the Lord, and at such times, as they think, pour out their Souls in humble Desires in a most earnest manner, that these Ordinances may be the Saviour of Life unto Life to them. But at other times, by the gross Neglect of some other Means, they pull down and destroy what in such Duties in appear-

appearance they build up. They will not guard and govern their outward Senses, Seeing and Hearing, but will wantonly look and gaze upon beautiful Persons; they will hearken to evil corrupt Communications, to Slanders and Backbitings: this ministers Fuel to their Heart's Lusts, and makes their Concupiscence burn, their Wrath and Anger boil within them. They will not keep their Hearts under strict Government, so as to cast out vain sinful Thoughts and Imaginations as much as they can: They will not be temperate in their Diet, but will eat and drink they care not how much nor what, tho' all the while they lay in Provision for the Lusts of their Flesh.

And how vain a thing is it in our Prayers to beseech God to mortify our Sins, and turn our Wills against them, when we ordinarily regard Iniquity in our Hearts, by suffering vain, covetous, proud, unclean, wrathful and revengeful Thoughts to lodge within us? How vain a thing is it at the Lord's Table to beseech God for Christ's sake to grant us his holy Spirit to subdue our Sins; when we before and after, at our own and other Mens Tables, feed and cherish them? In this World's Warfare Men starve an Enemy by cutting off all Supplies, as well as storm him: So must we deal with our Enemies in our Souls. Some Men will not forsake tempting Persons and Places, and Occasions of Sin, but will haunt Ale-houses, Taverns, and gluttonous Feasts, and keep company with Drunkards or great Drinkers, tho' they seldom come home sober, and all the Evening afterward be fit for nothing but Sleep.

When the Eyes and Ears are left open to look upon and hearken to ensnaring things, and the Heart is indulged in a Liberty freely without control, to think upon what is pleasing to corrupt Nature, and the Man takes liberty to keep any company; these things have a mighty Influence upon the Will to draw it forth in corrupt Desires.

But some will say, the things you mention as Means of Grace, we take to be Grace it self, the very things we pray for.

To such I say this : Take heed you do not mistake the Means of Grace for Grace it self, as I fear too many do, and so pray to God to do that for you, which God expects that you do for your selves. For instance, when a Man's Heart freely and willingly, with loathing and abhorrence, turns from evil sinful Imaginations, because he would not by them grieve and vex God's Spirit by defiling his Temple, this is the Exercise of Grace. When a Man in Prayer freely and willingly, with a holy Contempt and Scorn, turns from worldly Thoughts and Cares, this is the Exercise of Grace. When a Man in holy Meditation freely and willingly thinks upon God, his Attributes and Works ; upon Christ^l, his Death and Fulness ; and does love, praise, and believe in God and Christ at such a time, and abhor himself ; this is the acting of his Grace.

But when the Heart is forced and constrained by the natural Power a Man has over his thinking Faculty to cast out impure worldly Thoughts and Imaginations, which are as dear as Right Hands and Eyes ; this is using the Means of Grace : And a Man must do this in order to turn his Will from lusting after evil things. And when a Man forces himself even against his natural Inclination to think upon God, to meditate on his Word, and to remember Jesus Christ, and the World to come ; this is using the Means of Grace. And tho' a Man be never so backward and averse from such Meditations, yet he must force his unwilling Mind to meditate on these things, in order to the turning and changing of his Heart, that he may be able to fear and love God and Jesus Christ, and may be made willing and able to do those good Duties that are the Fruits of Love.

When a Man readily and willingly thinks upon the Evil of Sin, and hates it, and loaths it, and himself for it; this is the Exercise of Grace: But when a Man, tho' fore against his Will, thinks upon the evil Nature and evil Effects of Sin, and forces himself to dwell upon these sad and melancholy Thoughts; this is using the Means of Grace: And every unhumiliated Sinner must thus seriously consider of his Ways, if he desire to repent of them, or have his Will turned against them.

When a Man freely and willingly avoids evil Company, because he has no delight in them, but is vexed with their vain and wicked Conversation; this is the Exercise of Grace. When a Man freely chuses good Company, because he loves them, and delights in their holy Conversation; this is the Exercise of Grace. But when a Man, contrary to the Inclination of his Heart, forces himself from bad Company, with whose vain Conversation he has been, and would be now, greatly delighted; and when a Man against the Inclination of his Soul, constrains himself to go into the Company of good Men, whose religious Exercises are irksome and a burden to him; this is a Means of Grace. And he that would be changed, and of a wicked Man be made a good Man, must forsake the Company of the Wicked, and chuse good Men for his Companions; even as that Man, that would live, and not die of the Plague, must keep company with sound Persons, and avoid all infected Persons and Places.

But to return from this Digression: That that Man, who knows all God's appointed Means of Grace, and that it is his Duty to use them, that he may obtain Grace of God for the turning of his Will, and will not use them all, is not a true Penitent; I now proceed to prove. I do not speak of those, that know not the Means of Grace, or their Duty with respect to them; for their great Ignorance alters their Case very much; nor of those who being under the Power of

of Error, through an Excess of Humiliation, think they may not pray, nor take God's Covenant into their Mouths or Hearts, nor receive the Lord's Supper, nor come near God's People; but with the Publican stand afar off, with the Lepers of old, as unfit for Civil or Religious Society: But I speak of those Persons who have Knowledge, and know their Duty in this case, and against their Light and Knowledge live in the gross Neglect of some of the Means. For as it is not the bare Neglect of the Sacraments, but the Contempt of them, that is damning; so it is not the bare Neglect, or Omission, but the Contempt of some of the Means of Grace, that does ruin and undo Mens Souls: And all that are instructed in their Duty in these, and have sound Knowledge, and neglect any of them, are guilty of this Contempt.

Now then, that such wilful Neglecters of the Means of Grace, or any of them, are not penitent, I offer these Scriptures to prove. *Prov. 21. 25. The Desire of the Slothful killeth him, for his Hands refuse to labour.* A slothful Man, who will take no Pains, or not Pains enough, which is all one with no Pains (for as good never a whit as never the better) may have good Desires, and perish notwithstanding those Desires. This is true in Temporals and Spirituals. If a Man has a Family, and wishes his Wife and Children well, and prays to God for his daily Bread for himself and them, and is willing God should in his Providence provide for them, but will not take pains in some honest Calling for a Livelihood; that Man, notwithstanding his good Prayers, may want Necessaries for himself and all his Family. And if a Man has some Sense of his spiritual Infirmities and Wants, and desires and prays that God would give him Grace, and subdue his Sins, but will not take pains in the use of all the Means of Grace, he will go graceless: Yea, the slothful Man's Desires are said to kill him. How! Because God having said, that he hears the Desires of the

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humble,

humble, and that he hears the Prayers of his People ; and he experiencing good Desires in his Soul, and knowing that he hath offer'd up these Desires to God in Prayer, does rest here, and useth not other Means, and expects and waits for God's Performance of his Promise to him, in answering his Prayers, and in satisfying his Desires, which God will never do, because he neglects other Means, and so at last he dies in his Sin, and perishes for ever : Such a Man is not truly penitent, tho' he has good Desires in him. *Prov. 13. 4. The Soul of the Sluggard desireth, and hath nothing.* A Sluggard, who will not use all the Means, may desire Grace, but none he shall have. An Argument that his Desires not being accompanied with Endeavours, are not the Desires of a penitent Sinner. For true Penitents shall have what they desire and ask of God. *Prov. 28. 9. He that turneth away his Ear from hearing the Law, even his Prayer shall be Abomination.* It is possible that a Man that will not endure the plain Preaching and faithful Application of the Word, and consequently will not use this Means of Grace, may pray to God ; and whatever he prays for, whether Mercy or Grace, or both ; his Prayer shall not only not be heard, but be had in Abomination by the Lord : An undeniable Argument that such a Man is no Penitent. And O ! how many Professors be there, ay and Communicants too, that be so impatient of Reproof, that a Man were even as good take a Bear by the Tooth, as tell them plainly of their Miscarriages ! Such Mens snarling at and renting of those that set holy things before them, do more infallibly shew what manner of Persons they be, than all their Prayers do. *Luke 13. 24. Strive to enter in at the strait Gate ; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able ; that is, Strive with all your Might, in the use of all the Means God has appointed, to get Grace : for some will seek after some sort, in the use of some Means, but shall not attain to it : An Argument that their De-*
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fires and Prayers, because lazy, do not prove them to be penitent. And therefore at last such will be dealt with, as *wicked and slothful Servants*.

3. *He that duly uses all the Means of Grace, by them to get Grace to change his Will, that he may be willing of, and able for his Duty, and unwilling of Sin, is so far truly penitent*: that is, he that ordinarily prays to God for it, and that in the chief place, asking it of God before all other things; he that patiently hears, reads, meditates upon the Word; he that keeps holy the Lord's Day, and as he sees his Way clear comes to the Lord's Table; he that watches his Heart, resists vain and sinful Thoughts, and suffers them not to lodge within him; he that is temperate in his Diet, forsakes Temptations and Occasions of Sin; he that governs his outward Senses, and turns them away from Vanity and Sin; he that takes Reproof, and accompanies with God's People; that Man, I say, that is willing to be sanctified, and uses all these Means for his Sanctification, is so far a true Penitent. And he that truly desires this Grace before all other things, that he might be made willing of, and able for all Good, and unwilling of all Sin, will use all these Means to get it. We have a Saying, *Hunger will break through Stone-walls*. If a Man does hunger and thirst after Righteousness, Holiness, the Change of his Will, he will stick at no Pains, be afraid of no Difficulty. If a Man repents of his Sin, so as to desire above all things its Mortification, he will use all those Means that are proper to effect it. *Gen. 6. 6. And it repented the Lord that he had made Man on the Earth*: that is, God was not willing that that Race of Mankind should live any longer on the Earth, but that they should be destroy'd; and for that end he prepar'd and sent a Flood. God's using proper Means to destroy Man, is an Argument that he was truly willing and resolved to destroy them, and consequently that he repented of making Man. So Man repents of his Sin, when he is willing it should

be rooted out of his Nature, and will use all fit and proper Means for its Destruction.

While a Man is impenitent he makes Provision for the Lusts of his Flesh, both for their Preservation and Satisfaction ; but when he repents, he will make Provision for their Mortification : And he that makes Provision for Sin's Mortification, has in God's account mortified them, even as *Abraham* is said to have sacrificed his Son, because he was willing of it, and made Provision for it, and went about it. This is the Meaning of those Scriptures, wherein we are commanded to *circumcise our Hearts, to wash our Hearts from Wickedness, to make us new Hearts, and to mortify our Members that are upon the Earth* ; namely, that we be willing of these things, and use the likely and appointed Means to effect them.

We shall find in the Holy Scriptures, that sincere Penitents have used the Means of Grace to get Grace. *Psal. 119. 10. With my whole Heart I have sought thee. There David used Prayer. Ver. 11. Thy Word have I hid in my Heart, that I might not sin against thee. He meditated on God's Word, that so he might be kept from Sin. Ver. 55. I have remembered thy Name in the Night, and have kept thy Law. David used to meditate on the Nature and Attributes of God, to bring his backward Heart to his Duty. Ver. 59. I thought on my Ways, and turned my Feet unto thy Testimonies. David examined and considered his Ways, the Evil and Danger of them, that he might be willing to forsake his Sins, and turn to his Duty. Ver. 63. I am a Companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy Precepts. Ver. 115. Depart from me, ye Evil-doers ; for I will keep the Commandments of my God. David forsook bad Company, and chose good Companions, that he might the better keep himself from Sin, and bring himself to his Duty. Ver. 101. I have refrained my Feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy Word. David avoided all Temptations to, and Occasions of*

Sin, that he might have nothing to hinder him in the course of his Obedience; *Psal. 101. 3. I will set no wicked thing before mine Eyes*, neither those of the Body nor of the Mind. Like *Job*, he made a Covenant with his Eyes and Thoughts, that he would not think nor look upon ensnaring Objects. The Man that shall dwell with God in Peace is described to be one that *shutteth his Eyes from seeing of Evil*, that is, will look upon no Person or thing that may be a means to provoke evil Thoughts and Desires in him: *And that stoppeth his Ears from hearing of Blood, Isa. 33. 15.* That is, will not hearken to bad Counsel, that would persuade him to do an unjust thing. *Paul* kept under his Body by Temperance and Abstinence, lest he should not be sincere in his Repentance, and so miss the Mortification of his Sin, and be a Cast-away at last.

CHAP. IV.

Another part of Repentance is, when a Man in desiring a Change in his Will aims at the Honour and Enjoyment of God. A Man may be forced through the fear of Hell to be willing of a Change in his Will, and to use the means for it, and be no true Penitent. A true Penitent is moved to desire a Change in his Will, and to use the means for it, by the Fear and Love of God both. He that desires and endeavours this Change from Fear and Love both is a Penitent.

III. **A**Nother, and the finishing part of Repentance is, *when a Man in desiring a Change in his Will, aims chiefly at the Honour of God, and at the Enjoyment of God. A true Penitent is willing to be parted from his Sin, and that God's Spirit should make that Separation, and he is willing to wait upon God in all his Ways to receive the Holy Ghost for*

that end and purpose, and all this chiefly for this end, that he might return to God in Duty, and God might return to him in Mercy and Love. A Penitent judges this to be the chief End of his Being, that he might honour God by Obedience; and this the chief Happiness of his Soul, that he might enjoy God as his Portion. He judges God's loving Kindness better than Life it self with all its Comforts.

I. *A Man may be forced only by the fear of Hell to be willing that his Will be changed, and to use all the means for that, and be no Penitent.* Many Persons through the constraint of their Consciences, awakened by some rousing Sermon, or by the Thoughts and Fears of approaching Death upon a sick Bed, may be willing to be saved from their Sins, and to use any means for it rather than be damned to Hell. But this is no true Repentance, there is no Love to God in it, no Respect to his Glory, no Aim at the Enjoyment of God's Love. Such see the Necessity of Holiness, because without it no Man can be saved; but they do not see the Beauty and Excellency of Holiness, as that which makes a Man like God, and fits him for the Enjoyment of God. Such see the dreadful Effects and Fruits of Sin, but not its evil Nature. There is no Hatred of Sin in it, only Self-preservation from eternal Torments is desired. If such could any other way escape the Damnation of Hell, they would keep their Sins still and refuse Holiness. As a Man in a Storm at Sea throws his rich Goods over board, not because he hates them, but because the Ship being over-loaded, is in danger of sinking, and so can't keep them and Life too. So many a Man in a fright protests against his Sins, and renounces them, and prays to be saved from them, and will refuse no Pains necessary for his Change; but all this is only to serve a turn: When he thinks the Danger is over, his Repentance abates, and his Heart returns to his Sin again. Or as a Dog that hath over-gorg'd himself with

with Carrion vomits it up, not because he does not love it, but because it makes him sick; and when the sick fit is over, he licks it up again. 'Tis a Scripture-comparifon. In like manner, fome Men have taken a furfeit of Sin, more than their Confcienccs can well bear, and are therefore *Confcience-fick*, not *Heart-fick* of Sin: Their Confcienccs accufe and condemn them for what they have done; their Hearts, their Wills were never weary of their Sins. Therefore fomething muft be done to quiet Confcience, and Confcience being fick of Sin, they muft by a feeming Repentance caft it up; but when the fick-fit, the fright is over, they with the Dog return to their Vomit again. All the Prayers and Vows of fuch Men, being extorted from them only by the fear of Punifhment, are rejected by God. An Argument that their Repentance is not right; *Prov. 1. 26, 27, 28. I alfo will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your Fear cometh, when your Fear cometh as Defolation, and your Destruction as a Whirlwind, when Distrefs and Anguifh cometh upon you; then fhall they call upon me, but I will not hear, they fhall feek me early, but they fhall not find me.* Thefe Mens Prayers are rejected of God, not because they come too late, but because only the fear of Punifhment moved them to pray. In the words of the Text there is mention made of approaching Judgments, and their fearful Expectation of God's fiery Indignation that will deftroy them, God's Adverfaries, as the only Caufes of their Supplications; *Pla. 33. 14. The Sinners in Zion are afraid, Herfolim's hath furprized the Hypocrites, who among us fhall dwell with the decouring free? Who among us fhall dwell with everlafting burnings?* Thefe Men had right Apprehenfions of the Wrath of God, their flavifh Fears were raifed, and doubtlefs they were willing to be faved from the Wrath to come, and as other Men in the fame cafe, while they were in this Confternation, they protefted againft and renounced their Sins, and feemingly cut off right Hands, and

plucked out their right Eyes, and cast them from them, rather than their Bodies and Souls should be cast into Hell. But notwithstanding all this seeming Repentance, they being acted only by a slavish Fear of God, God calls them *Sinners* and *Hypocrites*. An undeniable Argument that they were not penitent. *Job 27. 8, 9, 10. What is the hope of the Hypocrite, tho' he hath gained, when God taketh away his Soul? Will God bear his Cry when Trouble cometh upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?* A Man that is sinking in deep Waters, to save himself from drowning, will catch hold of any thing, a two edged Sword, the sharpest Briars and Thorns; he will not be afraid of scratching, pricking or cutting his Hands, so he can but save his Life. A Hypocrite, when God is taking away his Soul, when Trouble is coming upon him, when the Pains and Fears of Hell get hold of him; then, rather than he will sink and perish quite, he will take hold of any thing; Holy Men shall be sent for, yea Holiness it self, which a little before was as a Briar or Thorn in his Flesh, shall be welcome; God shall be called upon, and that earnestly too, his Prayer will be a Cry; when all the while he has no Delight in God, nor in his Service, nor in his Holy Image, yet he had rather have these than worse things, the Flames of Hell. But notwithstanding all this, the Man is as far from Repentance, as he is from Sincerity: He is a Hypocrite, and therefore impenitent.

2. *A true Penitent is moved to desire and endeavour the Change of his Heart, his Will, by the Fear of God, and by the Love of God. And he that desires and endeavours this Change from the Fear and Love of God both, is a true Penitent.* He that truly repents forsakes his Sin, and chooses Holiness for fear of Hell, and this fear of Hell is usually the first thing that moves; and is the first thing that is perceived by the Penitent in himself. Yet this fear of Hell is not the only thing that prevails with him to part with his Sin; but also the love of

Holiness

Holiness and the hatred of Sin ; the love of pleasing and honouring God, and the hopes of enjoying for ever in Heaven that Happiness that is to be had in God's Love ; the Hatred and Abhorrence of displeasing and dishonouring God ; and the Dread of being cast away from God's blessed and glorious Presence. All these things concur and work together to make a Penitent willing to have all his Sins subdued. A penitent Person looks upon Hell as a place of Sin and Misery, where God is dishonoured and blasphemed in the highest degrees by his Enemies, and where God is fully avenged on his Enemies : And he dreads Hell upon both accounts. A Penitent, when under any great bodily Pains, is sore afraid lest his great Sufferings should cause him to think or speak evil of God.

A penitent Person looks upon Heaven as a place of Holiness and Happiness, where God is honour'd and enjoy'd, and he loves Heaven upon both accounts. And the sharpest Affliction is most welcome to him, when he experiences this as the Fruit of it, that he has afterward more of God's quickning and comforting Presence. If there were no Hell to punish him, such a Man would be not a Sinner, but a Holy Man : And that for God's sake, who is pleased with and honoured by Holiness, but is displeased with and dishonoured by Sin. As a Man, who is of an ill Temper, who yet loves his Wife, Children, Servants and Neighbours, would be not so froward, impatient and contentious as he is sometimes, if he could help it ; and that not only for Fear of the Law, that will punish him, if in his Passion he be guilty of any notable Excess ; but also for the Hatred of these evil Qualities, and for the Love of Meekness, Patience and Contentment ; and, for the quiet, comfortable and peaceable being of all about him, that live with him or near him : So a Man, that has a Heart full of corrupt Lusts and Passions, and void of all Good, but is penitent, would be not so wicked as he is ; and that not

not only for Fear of God's Punishment (tho' something for that) but also for the Hatred of Sin which dishonours God's Name, and crucified God's Son, and vexes his holy Spirit. And also for the Love of God, whom he would displease and dishonour no more. And he would be a Holy Man, not only for the Love of Happiness, which can't be had without Holiness (tho' something for that) but also for the Love of Holiness, in which he sees a great Excellency ; and also for the Love of God, who is pleased with Holiness and honoured by it ; and whom for the future he would always honour and please. *Paul says, 1 Tim. i. 9. That the Law is not made for a righteous Man, but for such abominable Sinners as he there mentions: That is, the Law considered in its prohibitive Stile, forbidding the gross Acts of the worst of Sins ; and in its Sanction the terrible Threatnings annexed to it ; is not suited to the Nature and Disposition of a good Man, who is not kept from Sin only by the Prohibitions and Threats of the Law ; but also by the Power of holy Love, which effectually draws him from Sin to Obedience. He loves a godly, just, temperate, chaste and peaceable Life ; and therefore he would be not ungodly, nor unjust, nor intemperate, nor unclean, nor unpeaceable, because these Sins are contrary to the Graces which he loves. And a true Penitent sees so great an Excellency in such a righteous good Neighbour, that he is willing to be such an one himself: And he sees so much Baseness and Vileness in himself as unholy and unrighteous, that he would not for all the World continue in that estate. David says, Psal. 119. 120. My Flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy Judgments. And in many places he mentions his Love to God, and to God's Law, and Service and People ; and his Hatred of Sin and Sinners. A plain Proof that he was moved by Fear and Love both, to turn from Sin to God. God, his Law, his holy Service, his holy Image, his Favour*
and

and Love, were the Objects of *David's* free Choice, to which his Soul did cleave in hearty Affection. He was not driven only by Frights and Fears, but he was also won and drawn by Love. This Spirit was not peculiar to *David*, as an extraordinary holy Man; but as a perfect Child, when first born, has all the Parts of a grown Man in him, so every one that is truly born again, and become a true Penitent, has all the essential Parts of a grown Christian, of which the Fear and the Love of God are two principal constituting Parts.

The Repentance *Paul* preached, *Acts* 20. 21. was a Repentance towards God, that is, a Repentance acted for God's sake; that Men should forsake their Sins for God's sake, that God might have that Glory and Praise which Sin has rob'd him of; and for God's sake, that Men may enjoy God's Love, which Sin had deprived them of; *1 Kings* 14. 13. *Abijah* had some good thing in him towards the Lord God of Israel. That is, he did dislike, and was unwilling of the Sins of the Times and Place in which he lived. This was the good thing that was in him. And this was towards the Lord God of Israel: That is, it was a Respect for God that made him out of love with Sin, because God was displeased and dishonoured thereby.

Now then to sum up what has been said: That Man, who sees the evil Nature of Sin, as it is against God's Honour and Glory, and the common Good of Mankind; and sees also the evil Fruits of Sin, as it exposes him a Sinner to the Wrath and Curse of God in this Life, and in that to come, and from both these Considerations is willing to have Sin rooted out of his Nature, and is resolved to use all the means appointed by God for its Mortification; that by it he may be no longer hindered from serving and honouring God, and from doing Good to his Neighbour, and for it may be no longer in danger of eternal Damnation; that Man that sees the excellent and glorious Nature of Holiness,

ness, as it is a Beam of the Divine Nature, for the Honour and Glory of God, and for the publick Good of all People ; and knows what are the blessed Fruits of Holiness, the Sight and Enjoyment of God ; and from both these Considerations is willing to be changed, and to be made holy, and is resolved to use all the Means appointed by God to obtain that Change of his Will, that he may be willing and able for the future to do the whole Will of God, for his Honour and Glory ; and that he may be willing and able for the future, to do all good Offices to his Fellow-Creatures, for their Good and Well-being ; and that he may have the Love of God for his Portion ; that Man, I say, is a true Penitent.

C H A P. V.

Adam's Loss by his Sin. Christ's Satisfaction, and Merits. What Imputation is.

THE Question to be spoken unto is,
What is Saving Faith in its lowest Degree ?

Many have shewn that Man by the Fall is a sinful miserable Creature, unable to help himself by his own Righteousness and Strength : And that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of fallen Man, and that as such he is a Prophet, Priest, and King ; whose Office it is to teach Men by his Word and Spirit the Saving Knowledge of God ; and to make and keep Mens Peace with God, by the Merits of his Death, and the Efficacy of his Intercession ; and by his Power and Authority to give Men the Holy Ghost, who by his Grace will save them from the Power and Being of Sin. And therefore I shall not enter upon a large and particular Opening of these things ; only I will in a few Words shew, that,

I. Adam by his Sin lost for himself and Posterity the Service of God, the Holy Ghost the Fountain of Holiness, and the Love of God : And every Man by his own personal Sins has made a farther Forfeiture of these things. When Adam was first made, he was God's Servant, quickned by God's Spirit to all moral Good, and comforted with the free Manifestation of God's Love. He was threatened with Death in case he did sin. He did sin, and in the Day he sin'd, he dy'd; that is, among other things, he was depriv'd in his Soul of all those spiritual Blessings God had bestowed upon him. He was turned out of God's Service, forsaken by the Holy Ghost, and deny'd the Enjoyment of God's Love : Spiritual Death!

Seeing Adam was made an active Being, and was cast off by God, and forsaken by his Guide and Life the Holy Ghost; it necessarily follows that he turn to the Creature, and love and serve that as he should have loved and served his Creator and Benefactor.

Seeing God does visit the Iniquities of the Fathers upon the Children, therefore all Adam's Posterity are under the same Condemnation with their Father Adam : that is, by Nature, or as descended from Adam, all Mankind are without God in the World, out of his Service, destitute of the Holy Ghost, and have no part in God's Love. It is certain from the Holy Scriptures, that God does visit the Sins of more immediate Parents upon their Children, in temporal and spiritual Judgments, as is to be seen in the Posterity of the unbelieving Jews, which Posterity, for their Parents murdering the Lord of Glory, have the Kingdom and Spirit of God taken from them, as well as their Land. If so, why should it be deny'd, that God did thus by Sentence visit Adam's Sin upon the whole World, and had also by Execution visited it too upon all Flesh for ever, had not Christ's Death interven'd? If a Subject by his Treason against his earthly Sovereign, forfeits for himself and Heirs, his Estate and Ho-

Honour formerly confer'd upon him by his Prince ; then *Adam* might and did, by rebelling against his Maker, forfeit for himself and his Posterity all spiritual Favours and Blessings before bestow'd upon him by his bountiful Lord.

And every Man by his own personal Sins has deserv'd to be turned out of God's Service, and to be forsaken by the Holy Ghost, and to lose God's Love and Favour, and suffer God's Wrath in Body and Soul for ever. And every Man for *Adam's* Sin, and for his own Sin, does suffer these Plagues in some measure in this Life, till it pleases God in his rich and free Grace to make a difference.

God's thus casting off all Mankind, and forsaking them for their Sin, was necessary for the vindicating his Holiness and Justice. For how would it have appeared to those innumerable Myriads of holy Angels above, that God is holy, and loves Holiness, and hates Wickedness, and will punish the Guilty ; if rebellious Man had continued in God's Favour and Service, under the quickening Influence of the Holy Spirit, as much as those loyal Subjects the holy Angels that never sinn'd ? But now in Man's Punishment all the Heavenly Hosts see, that God really hates Sin, and will not let the Guilty go free.

And it is necessary, by way of Retaliation, Compensation, or Requital, that Man should suffer all this for his Sin. He that has despised God's Service, so high, honourable and profitable an Employment, can't in Justice be punished with less than the Loss of God's Service. He that has by Sin grieved God's Spirit, can't receive his due Reward, unless the Holy Spirit depart from him. He that prefers any thing before the Love of God, would be punished less than his Sin deserves, if God did not hide his Face from him. He that does what he can in opposing by Sin God's Being, and all his Attributes and his Dominion, must suffer what Wrath he can as a Creature bear, and God can

infect. And seeing no Term of Time will suffice for this, therefore Man ought to suffer all this for ever.

Man being forsaken by the Holy Ghost, his Knowledge of, and Love to Goodness ceases, as necessarily as Light and Heat leave the Air when the Sun sets: And then Man can no more raise himself to a holy Life, than a Brute can raise it self to a Life of Reason. And Man being unable to live a holy Life without Sin, for this Reason among others, he can never make Satisfaction for his Sin in full, so as to be released from his Sufferings, because he sins still as long as he continues in Being, and so will still be God's Debtor, and owe him more and more Sufferings: And he that is in debt already, and runs in debt more and more every minute, will never get out of debt.

2. *Jesus Christ has made Satisfaction for Man's Sin.* What is that? Take it thus: Christ stood in Man's room. *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, Isa. 9. 6. He took not on him the Nature of the Angels, but the Seed of Abraham, Heb. 2. 16.* He perfectly kept the Law. So there was a Stop put to our running further in debt: Our Sin was charged upon him, laid to his Account, reckoned to him in respect of Obligation to Punishment, all one as if he himself had committed it. *And the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all, Isa. 53. 6.* He suffered for our Sins, as the meritorious Cause of his Sufferings; for us, the Persons in whose room and stead he suffer'd. *Christ died for our Sins, 1 Cor. 15. 3. This is my Body which is broken for you, 1 Cor. 11. 24.* Christ patiently and fully suffer'd whatever it pleased God as a just Ruler to inflict upon him for the Breach of his Law: Which were the Sorrows of this Life, the with-holding for a time the Manifestation of his Love, the pouring of his Wrath into his Soul, and the Death of the Cross. Christ having suffer'd all this for us, for our Sin, has suffer'd as much Pain and Shame, as there was Evil and Malignity in our Sin; so that the one will make

amends

amends and compensate for the other. For as it was God that was opposed and dishonoured by our Sin; so it was God that suffer'd, and was put to shame for our Sin. And as the Dignity of his Person, being God-Man, did add Value and Worth to his Sufferings, and made them of an infinite Merit; so it gave him Strength and Might, and enabled him to suffer more of the Wrath of God than all Creatures with their united Strength could bear. Christ being God-man, his Sufferings were equal to the Offence for which he suffer'd. *Isa. 53. 7. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted.* Some translate the Words thus: *It was exacted, and he answer'd*; that is, the Punishment of our Sin was exacted, or, he was required to bear our Punishment, not a part of it, but all of it, as much as our Sin deserv'd: And he answer'd; he suffer'd as much as was due, and was requir'd.

And Christ by his Sufferings for us for our Sins, hath fully and to all Intents and Purposes manifested and declared God to be a Holy and a Just God; and hath struck a Terror and Dread of sinning into all the Holy Angels, as much as Man's suffering for ever in the utmost Rigour what he hath deserv'd, would have done. Doubtless the Holy Angels, that were Spectators of our Lord's Agony in the Garden, and of his Death on the Cross, do and ever will retain a deep and indelible sense what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against the Lord. And this (for ought we know) may be one Means of their Confirmation.

And God is pleased and contented with this Compensation for Man's Sin, and with the Demonstration of his Holiness and Justice in, or by Christ's Sufferings, as well, or as much as he would have been, if we had suffer'd in Body and Soul all the temporal, spiritual, and eternal Plagues and Wrath, we have by Sin deserv'd. This is the Satisfaction of Christ. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, Mat. 3. 17. Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation, through Faith*

in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins that are past, through the Forbearance of God: To declare, I say, at this time his Righteousness, that he might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, Rom. 3. 25, 26. Christ gave his Life, himself, a Ransom for all, 1 Tim. 2. 6. Mat. 20. 28. that is, as an Enemy having taken a Captive, a Prisoner, either detains him in Prison, to please his Wrath and Revenge; or sets him to hard slavish Work, to gratify his Covetousness, promoting his Gain by the Labour of his Captive: But being offer'd a certain Sum of Money for his Captive's Liberty, and judging this to be to all Intents and Purposes as profitable to him, as his Prisoner's Imprisonment and Slavery would be; he accepts the Money for him, or takes that Money in the room and stead of the Captive's remaining in Captivity, and thereupon sets the Captive free.

So here, Man having sin'd against God, he is by God, his offended Lord, deliver'd over to Satan, and left under the Power of Sin, and the Curse of the Law, that God by this Punishment of Man might glorify himself as an offended Majesty. But Christ offering himself to suffer for Man's Sin, for the same Ends and Purposes for which Man was to suffer for his Sin, viz. to make amends for the Wrong Man had done God by his Sin, to manifest God's Holiness and Justice, and to secure God's Dominion and Government for the future, by keeping his Subjects in awe; and God judging Christ's suffering for Man's Sin as sufficient for these Ends and Purposes, as Man's suffering would have been; did accept Christ's suffering in the room and stead of Man's suffering for these Ends what he had deserv'd to suffer, and so sets every Man free that accepts of it in God's Way.

3. *What has Christ merited, or deserved for us by his Obedience to the Death?*

Christ hath by his Death deserved, or merited for us, that we should be received into God's Service

again, upon our humble suing for it in his Name. 1 Pet. 3. 18. *Christ also hath once suffer'd for Sins, the Just for the Unjust, that he might bring us to God: namely, as Run-away Servants, to be kindly receiv'd again.* Eph. 2. 13. *But now in Christ Jesus, ye, who some times were far off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ.* You who were without God, out of his Service, are now related to God as your Master, and owned by him as his Servants.

And Christ hath by his Death merited for us, that the Holy Ghost should return to us upon our humble and believing Praying for him. Tit. 3. 5, 6. *And renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.* Therefore Sin is said to be crucified with him, and his Blood is said to cleanse from all Sin; because he died to procure the Holy Ghost for us, whose Grace mortifies and cleanses from all Sin.

And Christ hath merited for us Deliverance from the Damnation of Hell, and the Gift of Eternal Life. 1 Thess. 1. 10. *Jesus which deliver'd us from the Wrath to come.* Rom. 6. 23. *But the Gift of God is Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

4. *What is Imputation?* It is the reckoning, or setting down to a Man's Account, what is done or paid for him by another; so that he shall have the Benefit of it, and for it be discharged from doing or paying so much himself in his own Person, as that is worth and was designed for, that was done or paid for him. For instance, a Tradesman in his Book of Accounts sets down what Money he lent, and what Goods he sold upon Trust to his Chapman. Afterwards, as the Debtor pays his Debts by little and little, the Creditor sets down what his Debtor paid at one time and another; and if the Debtor hath a Friend that pays any Money for him, or does any valuable Service for him, to the Creditor; the Creditor sets it down as paid and done by such a Man, for and to the Use of

the Debtor: And when they come to reckon, what was paid or done for the Debtor by his Friend, is reckoned by the Creditor as paid or done for the Debtor's Use, and the Debtor shall have the Benefit of it, all one as if he had paid the Money, and done the Work himself: And so much shall be out-set by the Creditor: and not be exacted of the poor Debtor. This is Imputation among Men.

Christ's Righteousness is imputed to us, that is, his Obedience to the Death was designedly paid by him for us, in the room of what we, God's Debtors, owed him, and should have paid him, and was as such accepted of God: and we shall have the Benefit of it, and be discharged from suffering so much in our own Persons, as Christ's Obedience to the Death was worth, and was designed and intended for, as a Payment or Satisfaction. And that being of Worth sufficient to content or satisfy God's Justice, for the Wrong our Sin had done; and also to declare God's Holiness, and to cause all that hear of it, to fear, and do no more so wickedly; God will not avenge himself upon us by casting us away from his Presence for ever, and by taking away his Holy Spirit from us for ever, and by suffering his Wrath in the utmost Severity to fall upon us for ever: Neither will God glorify himself in our Eternal Destruction, nor secure his Government or Dominion for the future, by making us Examples to all that hereafter shall rebel. But God will glorify his Love, Free Grace, Mercy, and Almighty Power, in bringing to that Primitive State of Holiness and Happiness, in which Man was at first created, and far greater, all of us that have Faith in Christ. *Rom. 4. 6. Blessed is the Man to whom the Lord imputeth Righteousness without Works. Gal. 3. 13, 14. Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us, that the Blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. Tit. 2. 14. Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify*

Purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of Good Works. Christ was made a Curse for us, he gave himself for us: This signifies his Sufferings, he suffered a cursed Death: To redeem us from the Curse of the Law; that we might not be cursed with spiritual and eternal Curses, as the Law did threaten. That he might redeem us from all Iniquity; that we might not be condemned to lie under the Power of Sin for ever. That the Blessing of Abraham might come on us; that we might be blessed with the same Blessing with which Abraham was blessed. That he might purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of Good Works; that we might be his People in a Covenant of Grace, and quickened and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, so as to be made willing of and able for a holy Life.

CHAP. VI.

What Saving Faith is, is particularly shewn, and what Works are necessary to prove Faith to be true.

THE things in the foregoing Chapter being premised; he that understands his sinful miserable Condition, and his need of a Saviour; and does believe, being convinced by Christ's Miracles, or by some other good Argument, that *Jesus Christ* is the Son of God, and only Saviour of the World; and also understands the Offices of Christ, as Prophet, Priest, and King; and does believe, what the Scriptures say of these Offices of Christ, to be true; and does give his hearty Consent, or is willing that *Jesus Christ* be his Saviour, to save him from Sin and Wrath, and is willing to learn of him the Knowledge of God by the teaching of his Word and Spirit; and is willing that Christ's Obedience and Death for him should pass, and be accepted of God, in the room and stead

of what he a Sinner owed God, and will trust only in the Merits of Christ as the procuring Cause, to receive from God, Mercy, Grace, and Glory; and is willing to receive from Christ the Holy Ghost as his Sanctifier; that Man, I say, that makes such an understanding hearty Choice of Christ for his Saviour, does believe in Christ. John 1. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe in his Name.* Receiving Christ, and believing in Christ, is the same thing in this Text. Coloss. 2. 6. *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord.* This receiving, or accepting Christ for the Ends and Purposes before mentioned, is Faith.

Mutual Consent constitutes all contracted Relations, as between Master and Servant, Man and Wife; so between Christ the Head, and his Body the Church, and every particular Member thereof. Christ in his Word hath declared his Willingness to be our Saviour, and as soon as we are willing to have him, and to be saved by him, the Match is made. *My Beloved is mine, and I am his,* Cant. 2. 16.

But some will say, seeing the Holy Scriptures speak so much of Works, that Faith without Works is dead, *What Works are necessary to prove our Faith true?*

The present Enquiry is not after the Strength, but the Truth of Faith, and that in the lowest Degree. Therefore we must enquire what is the lowest Degree of Obedience, that will prove our little Faith to be true and saving.

As in opening the Nature of Repentance in its lowest degree, I shew'd what a change it works in the Heart, the Will, not what it works in the Life and outward Conversation, with respect to Obedience to the Laws of God; for that belongs to the Growth and Strength of Repentance: So in opening the Nature of the lowest degrees of the Obedience of Faith, we must search the Heart, the Will, not the Life; for

with the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness, Rom. 10. 10. All the Nature, the whole of Faith, both assent and consent, which includes Obedience, is first wrought in the Heart, and afterwards shews it self in the Life, *Ye have obeyed from the Heart, Rom. 6. 17.* The Obedience of the *Romans* was in their Hearts first, and thence spread it self in their Lives; therefore Holiness and Reformation in the Life, is an Argument rather of the Strength than of the Truth of Faith. And upon that account we must not examine our selves by that, but by what is in the Heart.

If when a Scion or graft is Grafted into a Stock, a Man should presently look for its shooting forth Branches, bearing Leaves and Fruit, as a Proof of its being alive, he would be too hasty, and would judge of the Life of the Graft, by that which is a sign of Life in a grown bearing Tree. And what a foolish thing is that! He must rather consider whether the Stock and Graft be knit together by the Communication of that lively Sap and Juice, which is the bond of Union between them. If that be, the Graft is alive, and hath in it virtually Branches, Leaves, Blossoms and Fruit, tho' at the present there is no appearance of these things, any more than before it was grafted.

In like manner, if, when a Man professes to be grafted into Christ by Faith, any one should presently look for Good Works in the Life, as a Proof of the Truth of his Faith, he would judge by that which is a sign of a grown strong Faith, and not by the Marks of a true Faith. Such an one must rather examine whether the Heart, the Will, be conquered and made to stoop to Christ, for that is the first Act of Obedience paid to Christ after he is received, and virtually contains in it all Obedience or Holiness of Life, and proves the Man's Faith to be sound and saving, and him to be a living Member of Christ. Now what is that submitting of the Will to Christ

a Man that says he has receiv'd Christ ? To make use again of the former Similitude, when a Graft and Stock are set together according to Art, the first and principal thing that is done for a lively Union is this, the Stock gives up Sap and the Graft receives it : As soon as that is done, they are one, Incorporated together, and the Graft thenceforth lives by the Stock. So, when a Man outwardly in Profession joined to Christ, willingly receives from Christ the Holy Ghost for his Sanctifier, Christ and he are one, and he lives by Christ. *He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit, 1 Cor. 6. 17. Hereby we know that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us, and which is implied, we have received of his Spirit.* The Language of the Heart of an Unbeliever, or of one that believes with a dead Faith is this, I will not have this Man, Christ, to reign over me, either by his Word or Spirit. The Language of the Heart of one that believes with a lively Faith, is this, I will have, I do accept of the Spirit of Jesus Christ to rule in me. This contains all Obedience in it, and all Holiness will spring from this, as all Fruits after their kind from their several Seeds sown in the Earth. This accepting the Holy Ghost as the Gift of Christ, purchased by his Death, that he might by his Grace sanctifie the whole Man, is the Hearts submitting to Christ, and the first Act of Obedience paid to him, and does most certainly prove the Man's Faith to be a lively Faith, by which he lives and shall live. Christ said to the Woman of Samaria, *John 4. 10. If thou knewest the Gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living Water.* That is, if thou hadst so known the *Messias*, as to believe in him with a lively Faith, thou wouldest have asked and received of him the Holy Ghost. That is the first Act of Obedience to himself, Christ would have expected from her, if she had had Faith. Where the Holy Ghost is

received, he works a Change in the Heart, before the Life is reformed. He works,

1. *A Resolution now presently to leave all Sin.* True Gospel Repentance and saving Faith are inseparable, they be preach'd together, and wrought both of them in the same Person ; so that he that returns to God, returns to God by Jesus Christ. Now I shewed before, CHAP. II. That a true Penitent desires to have his Will changed, that he may be made unwilling of Sin ; and that when any one is willing to have his Will turned, God gives such his holy Spirit, that he might change his Heart. And a little before, I shew'd, that he that believes in Christ, obeys Christ in receiving the Holy Ghost from him. Now the Holy Spirit, when received, works this Purpose or Resolution in the Will, presently to leave all Sin. Not that such a Man promises, in respect of the Event, that he shall never more commit any Sin ; but that he purposes never more to sin against God. Or, that he will not live in the Practice or Commission of any thing that he knows to be a Sin. The inward Thought of a wicked Unbeliever, if some sudden Fright does not force him to take up a Resolution contrary to his settled Inclination, is to sin again when he shall have an opportunity, *Prov. 23. 35. I will seek it yet again.*

2. *A Resolution to learn to do well, viz. to learn of Christ in his way the Knowledge and Performance of our Duty :* That we will seek from Christ Direction and Assistance for all Good Works.

3. *A Resolution, as we get Knowledge and Strength, to do our Duty.* At our first Covenanting with Christ, we do not engage presently to do every Duty, because that is above our present Strength : But we be willing that the whole Will of God be done by us, and we promise to do every Duty as Christ shall give us Ability ; which Ability we promise to seek from Christ in his ways, when we resolve and promise to learn to do well.

Now then to summ up what has been said, that Man that is truly willing, that Jesus Christ by the Authority he has received from the Father, for the sake of his most meritorious Death, should give him the Holy Ghost; and that does give his hearty Consent, that the Holy Ghost do ever more dwell in his Soul as his Sanctifier; that Man, I say, has obey'd Jesus Christ so as to prove his Faith in him to be true and saving. And that Man, who, after his pretended receiving of the Holy Ghost, finds a Resolution wrought in his Soul, now presently to leave all Sin, and to learn to do well, and as he shall get Knowledge and Strength, to do every Duty; that Man has further obey'd Christ: and this threefold Resolution in him is an infallible Evidence that he has received the Holy Ghost as his Sanctifier in Truth; for this threefold Resolution is as three main Branches, from whence all Reformation in the Life, and all Holiness towards God, and all Righteousness towards Man, will spring and grow more and more in God's way and time: And is the Fruit of the Holy Ghost received. I will offer some things for the Proof of this, *viz.* that as soon as a Man has thus received from Christ the Holy Ghost, and is come to a resolution in these three Points, he has obey'd Christ so as to prove his Faith to be true, and consequently is justified in God's Sight, and forgiven all his Sins, tho' as yet for want of Time and Opportunity he has done no one Good Work outwardly, nor actually forsaken any Sin. God does not suspend his Judgment of a Persons obeying the Gospel, till he has actually perform'd something of his Vows; but seeing God infallibly knows the Hearts of all Men, he knows who is sincere in his Purpose for a Holy Life, and all such he presently judges to have obey'd the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the same minute gives them their Pardon, before they have by any outward Act given Proof of their Sincerity: *Psal. 32. 5. I said, I will confess my Transgressions unto*

the Lord, and thou forgavest the Iniquity of my Sin. When David had conceived a sincere purpose to confess his Sin, which God knew, before he had actually made his Confession, God forgave him his Sin. Now then to prove the Point :

1. *This is accepted by Masters from their Servants at their first Covenanting.* When a Lad is first bound Prentice, he does not promise, and his Master does not require him, to do presently any, much less the hardest Work of the Trade he is bound to. But he engages presently to leave off his childish Plays and Vanities, and to give himself to his Master's Business, and to be willing to be taught, and to learn to work at his Master's Trade, and as his Knowledge and Ability comes, to work. This is what is required at the first Sealing the Indentures, and presently thereupon he is received into his Master's Family, and has the Privileges of his Master's House to be protected and maintain'd there, all one as if he could work never so well. Most certain it is, that God in Christ is a better Master to all his young Servants, than the best Master upon Earth is to their Apprentices. And therefore he will accept of that from his Servants at first, which all Men accept from their Servants.

2. *This is expressly requir'd by God, and it has the Promise of Mercy.* When God has call'd his People to Repentance, which includes their Faith in him, this hath been the thing that has been requir'd, *Isa. i. 17, 18.*—*Cease to do Evil, learn to do Well.*—*Tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be white as Snow ; tho' they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wool.* Here God requires that we put away our Sins, cease to do Evil, resolve against Sin ; then God requires that we learn to do well, that we use the means to get Knowledge to direct us, and Strength to enable us for our Duty ; and then that we do it. Some Particulars of which God there mentions. And then he promises Mercy. *Mat. 11. 28, 29.* *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will*

I will give you Rest. Take my Yoke upon you, and learn of me. And ye shall find rest unto your Souls. Those that Christ invites to come to him, or believe in him, which is all one, must take his Yoke upon them, cast off the Service of Sin, and accept of the Holy Law of God to rule them; and if they can't keep it, they must learn Obedience of Christ, and their Rest is promised to their Souls.

Believers were first called *Disciples*, Scholars, Learners, and the Twelve Apostles, the chief of those that did believe, were a long time little else but Learners. 'Twas very little they could do or suffer for Christ at first, tho' they were bound to do every thing, and suffer the worst of Evils for their Lord's Honour, yet they could not follow him at first in his Passion. *John 13. 16. Thou canst not follow me now.* They all forsook him and fled, and one of them did abundantly worse, he deny'd him with horrid Oaths and Curses. But they were all save one sincerely willing to leave whatever offended God; and they desired to be taught and learn their Duty, and they intended to do it as God should enable them; and for his assisting Grace they attended upon Christ's Ministry, and waited at *Jerusalem*, as Christ had order'd them, till they were endued with Power from on high. Christ knew this was in their Hearts in Truth, and therefore pronounced them clean, *John 15. 3.*

3. The Law of God is deliver'd in Negatives, except one in the first Table, Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy; and one in the second Table, Honour thy Father and thy Mother. There is something positive in all the Commandments required, tho' they be deliver'd in negative Words; Thou shalt not do this, thou shalt not do that; but they be deliver'd in a negative Style, because we be required first to cease to do Evil, and the fourth and fifth are deliver'd in positive Terms, requiring us to do something, viz. to keep holy God's Day, and to honour our Parents; because when we

be willing to cease to do Evil, we must learn to do well: and when our Teachers and Parents on the Sabbath-day teach us our Duty, and we learn it of them, we do then learn to do well; and that is one way of keeping that Day holy, and of honouring our Parents.

4. *Jesus Christ, the Object of our Faith, is consider'd as our Saviour and Physician, and we as his Patients.* Christ is indeed God, our Maker, and we be his Creatures, and so we be bound to serve him with a present working or active Obedience. But he offers not himself to us as he is God, to be believed in by us; and therefore a present active working Obedience, in an immediate keeping his Moral Laws, in their positive and negative Extent, is not required to prove our Faith true. But Christ is God-Man, a Saviour, a Physician for Sin-sick Souls, and in that respect he is the Object of our Faith. And such an Obedience, as our Infirmary and Weakness will afford and can perform, and as is suited to the healing Work he has undertaken, which is a Passive Obedience, is required to prove our Faith true and saving: Which Passive Obedience does consist in our yielding or submitting our selves to his healing Vertue and Methods; including withal a Purpose, as Christ a Saviour shall enable, to serve Christ as God, in keeping all his Moral Laws. What that Passive Obedience is, take in this plain Comparison.

A certain Man, who is both a Farmer and Physician, hath a Servant sick; the Servant is bound by his Bargain to do his Master's Husbandry-work, but he cannot, because he is sick; his Master is willing to be his Doctor, and do what he can to cure him, if he will accept of him for his Physician, and will take his Portions of Physick, and will observe all the Directions about his Diet, and other things he shall prescribe him; and will, as he mends and gets Strength, serve him again faithfully in his Farm-work. The sick Servant is willing of his Master's kind Offer, and thank-
fully

fully accepts of him for his Physician. The Obedience which at present the Servant can perform, and his Master requires, is, that he take his Medicines, and forbear all Meat and Drink that feed his Distemper, and that he be rul'd and govern'd in every thing that shall further his Recovery: and then afterwards, as he recovers Strength, that he work for him in his Husbandry-work. If the sick Servant do thus obey his Master, it is a certain Sign he was hearty and in good earnest, when he took his Master for his Physician.

So here Christ, as God, is our Maker, and we be his Creatures, and be bound to serve him this present Moment perfectly in all Holiness and Righteousness; but we cannot, because we be Sinners disabled by Sin: But Christ, God-man, is willing to be our Saviour, our Physician, to cure our Souls, if we will accept of him for that End and Purpose, and will observe all his appointed Means by which he will heal our Souls, (of which before in Repentance) and if we will, as he shall heal and strengthen us, serve him in all Holiness and Righteousness as God. We accept Christ's gracious Offer, and give our Consent that Jesus Christ be our Saviour: The Obedience which we can at present perform, and which our Saviour expects, is, that we resolve to use all the Means of Grace, by them to get Grace wrought in our Souls; and that we purpose afterwards, as we be healed and strengthened, to serve him as God in all Holiness and Righteousness. If we do thus obey Jesus Christ our Saviour, we do thereby shew that we were hearty and sincere in our accepting him for our Saviour, and consequently that our Faith is a true lively Faith.

Reader, I suppose thee to be a Man subject to like Passions with other Men who hast many Failings and Infirmities in thy Life, which cause many Doubts and Fears in thee, so that many times thou canst not tell what to make of thy self. The more thy Miscarriages be, without doubt the weaker thy Faith is; but they
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be not an Argument that thou hast no Faith at all. Therefore ask thy self these Questions : Am I willing to receive from Christ the Holy Spirit to change my Heart, turn my Will, and reform my Life ? Am I resolved against all Sin, that I will not wilfully live in the Practice of any known Sin ? Am I resolved to learn of Christ to do well ? Am I resolved to use all the Means of Grace by them to get sanctifying Grace ? Am I resolv'd by the Grace Christ shall give me to serve God in keeping his holy Laws ? If thou can'st truly answer, Yes, to all these Questions, thou hast obeyed Jesus Christ so as to prove thy Faith a saving Faith.

If thou dost object against thy self, thy great Neglects of the Means of Grace, and thy many Sins, and thy great ones, and often Relapses into them, even since thou hast been willing, (as thou thinkest) to receive the Holy Ghost, and hast purposed to leave all Sin, and hast resolved to learn to do well, and by the Strength of Christ to obey God better ; and therefore dost think that these Resolutions are not sincere : I shall not now, but it may be another time may, say something concerning this Case, and shew that there may be true Grace in great Sinners, that are guilty of great Relapses, and how that may be known. Only for the present I say this : Beware thou dost not deny the Grace of God in thee, and what he hath done for thy Soul. Dost thou now purpose and resolve, when an Opportunity shall serve, to commit any one Sin again ? What is the Thought of thy Heart about that ? Is it not, not to sin ? Dost not wish that thou may'st be kept from it, tho' it be only by restraining Grace ? Dost thou not sometimes pray ? and sometimes read, hear, and meditate on the Word ? Dost not sometimes watch thy Heart, and govern thy outward Senses ? Dost not sometimes avoid Temptations and Occasions of Sin ? Did'st never come to the Lord's Table ? Hast not used these Means, when thou didst

didst use them, for this End, that thou mayest get Grace out of Christ's Fullness to change thy Heart, and hast not afterward found thy Heart in some degree changed and turned against Sin? Hast not afterward resisted some Temptations, and kept thy self sometimes from thy Sin? Hast not found thy Heart afterwards inclin'd towards God's holy Laws, so that thou hast sometimes done some good Duties in obedience to God, for his Glory? And is all this nothing with thee?

O! but it is but sometimes that I do this, at other times I act quite contrary! Who do's this always? I pray thee shew me that Man, and then let him throw the first Stone at thee.

Let me give thee this Advice: Examine impartially what God has done for thee upon this account, and be thankful for it, and stir up thy self, and the Gifts of God in thee, and wait diligently and constantly upon God in all his Ordinances, use all Means, and in them look for the Holy Ghost to come upon thee, and God's Spirit will, in these Ways of God's Appointment, move upon thy Heart. And as the Light and Heat of the Sun is its own Evidence; so that Knowledge, Faith, Hope, Love, Zeal, Godly Sorrow, Holy Indignation against Sin, Thankfulness and Praise, and earnest Desires after more, that shall then be wrought in thy Soul, will infallibly prove what Spirit thou hast received, and by what Spirit thou art acted: And the Holiness which will follow hereupon in thy Life, will most certainly prove that thou wast sincere, when thou didst purpose to leave thy Sin, and to learn to do well, and in the Strength of Christ to serve God in all Holiness and Righteousness. Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so believing in, and so obeying of, *Jesus Christ*.

